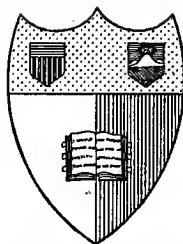


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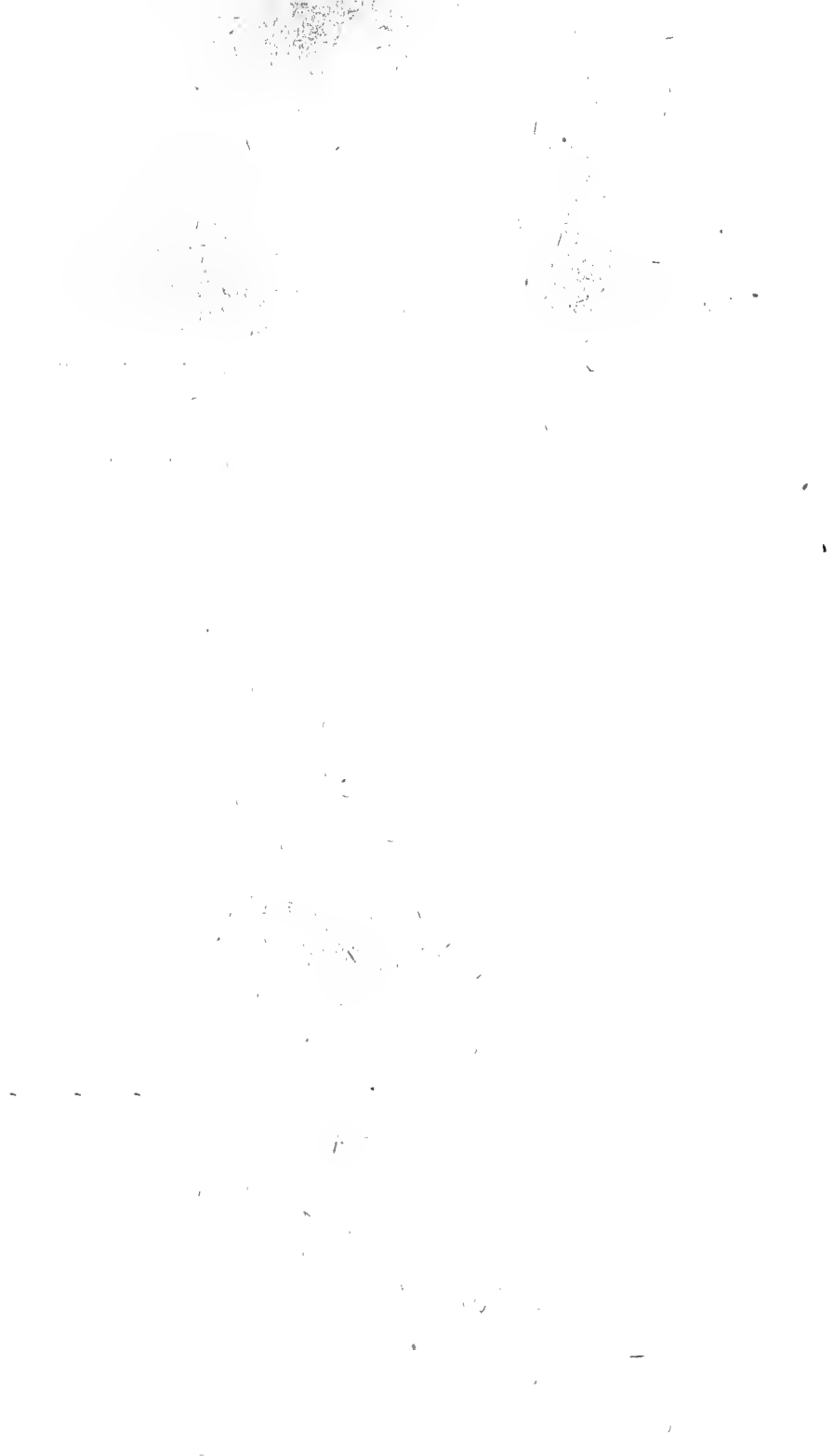
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History of the town of Hampstead, N.H.,



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HISTORY

OF THE

TOWN OF HAMPSTEAD, N. H.,

FOR ONE HUNDRED YEARS.

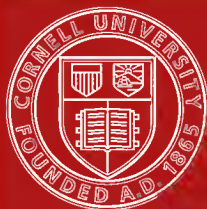
BY ISAAC W. SMITH.

As contained in a Historical Address delivered July 4, 1849.

HAVERHILL, MASS.:

1884.

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HISTORICAL ADDRESS.

FELLOW CITIZENS, AND

NATIVES OF HAMPSTEAD :

By your invitation, I am to speak of our honored forefathers ; of men whose lives were the history of our own homes,—whose characters were indissolubly identified with the Revolution of our Independence.

To us this day is *doubly* interesting. We have met to celebrate the anniversary of our Nation's birth ; to pay a passing tribute to those who stood up manfully in the strife for freedom, and nobly gave their lives, to lay deep the foundations of that Government, under which we live in such perfect security of life and liberty.

We have also met to celebrate an event in which we are *peculiarly* interested. A century is just completed, since a handful of hardy settlers were honored with an Act from King George II, incorporating this place with the privileges and conveniences of a municipal government. We have met to recount the early history of our town ; to rescue from oblivion the names of its settlers ; to honor the memory of its most worthy inhabitants ; and to show our love and veneration for the spot “where our eyes first saw the light,” or to which, from a long residence within its limits, we have become ardently attached.

Unfortunately for posterity, there has been too little care bestowed upon the preservation of those legends in our earlier annals, which gave the truest index to the charac-

ter and habits of our ancestors and make up a valuable part of their eventful lives. Though removed only two centuries from the earliest scenes in New England history, we are yet ignorant of many of the most interesting particulars of that period. The eventful story of our forefathers is yet to be written. "The lore of the fireside is becoming obsolete. With the octogenarian few, who still linger among us, will perish the unwritten history of border life in New England."

The period of the Trojan war is called the Heroic Age of Greece. The Iliad of Homer, founded upon the incidents of that war, represents to us, in startling reality, the characteristics of the ancient Grecians; their indomitable spirit and unyielding courage; their superstitious awe of divine interference; their love of country predominating over that of kindred; their eager desire to be led forth to battle; their restless inactivity in time of truce; the martial spirit they infused in youthful breasts;—all those qualities, that made the Grecian's fame reach the most distant shores. The sightless bard has portrayed to us, with matchless skill, the noble impress of the power of the generals of Greece; the wisdom of her statesmen; the eloquence of her orators, surpassing emulation; the sublimity of her poets, more musical and harmonious than any who lived before them, than all who have lived since their time.

England's Heroic Age embraces the darkest and most complex period in her annals. In tracing down events through the Middle Ages, the historian, when near the Age of Chivalry, finds that the poet has woven, out of the doubtful and obscure, dark and mysterious tragedies; "that he has occupied the vacant field, turned to account the dark hint and half-breathed suspicion, and poured into the unoccupied and too credulous ear his thrilling and attractive tale; that the genius of Shakspeare seized upon the history of this era as a vacant possession, and peopled it with beings, who had indeed historic names, but whose attributed actions lack the stamp of authenticity."

But the *Heroic Age of New England*, the eventful story of the Puritans, has far more interesting connections. Looking back through a period of little more than two centuries, we turn to Old England's shores, to the scenes in which they were "burning and shining lights," to the days of their long persecutions, to their noble confessions of faith before the world, and "sealed with their blood." At Delfthaven we see them kneel on the sea-shore; commend themselves with fervent prayer to the blessing and protection of Heaven; part forever from friends, and home, and native land; embark upon the almost unknown seas, and uncomplainingly encounter the dangers of the deep, to reach a place where they may in security worship the living God. And when their lone vessel reaches the bleak and barren sands of Cape Cod,—

"On the deck then the Pilgrims together kneel down,
And lift their hands to the source of each blessing,
Who supports by his smile, or can blast with his frown,
To Him their returns of thanksgiving addressing.
His arm through the ocean has led to the shores,
Where their perils are ended, their wanderings are o'er."

We admire the enthusiasm which impelled them to emigrate; the firm, unshaken spirit with which they met the horrors of Indian warfare, endured the extreme privations of the comfortable homes they had left behind, the sufferings and death from disease and a cold winter, "lamenting that they did not live to see the rising glories of the faithful." The memory of these men lives enshrined in our hearts and enthroned upon our affections. Their energy and incorruptible integrity prepared the way for the complete enjoyment of those blessings which New England people so preeminently possess. Amidst the stirring excitement of the present day, simple legends of the past have become, many of them, irretrievably lost. No poet has yet sung of the heroism of the Pilgrim Fathers. In coming ages, some Homer may arise, who shall describe in immortal verse, the *Heroic Age of the New World*; who shall sing of the *May Flower of Plymouth Rock*; of Heroes

more noble than Achilles or the son of Priam ; of moral conflicts more sublime, of defeats more signal than the battle between Greek and Trojan, than the sight of the ruins of smouldering Ilium ; and of eloquence more sublime than the appeals of Trojan Chiefs, or the thrilling harrangues of Grecian Leaders ; who shall sing of a submission to the decrees, and of an obedience of the commands, of the living and true God, more humble and yet more beautiful, than the blinding superstitions and imposing ceremonies and sacrifices of the heathen deities.

An affectionate and respectful remembrance of our worthy ancestors, is a debt of gratitude which we can pay in no other way, so appropriately, as by the exercises of to-day.

If tradition speaks truly, the first inhabitants of this town were two Indians, who lived near Angly Pond. An Indian is also said to have lived near the large oak* in this neighborhood. No further information of the history of these men can be found. But these rumors are undoubtedly correct ; for the fine facilities for fishing, which the ponds in this town then offered, and the fine hunting grounds the forests then presented, must have rendered it a favorite resort of the Red Man.

Our imaginations carry us back to the time, when this land was inhabited by the Indian only, and to scenes witnessed or enacted by him alone, in centuries gone by. A wild and roving people once lived in these places, once performed their sacred rites in these beautiful groves, celebrated their festive days with strange ceremonies, and payed tribute to the memory of their dead, with strange lamentations. Unaccustomed to till the soil, and independent of the cares of life, they roved in careless indolence through these fields, bathed in these waters, and threaded the mazes of these forests, in uninterrupted pleasure.

*This tree stands in front of the dwelling house of Mr. Benjamin Sawyer, and is the same to which allusion is made by Rev Henry True. It measures about 25 feet in circumference. It is hollow, and formerly, by means of a hole near the ground, was a favorite hiding place for the boys in the neighborhood. This aperture has now grown over.

To use the language of another,† — “Here, long ago, and perhaps on the very spot where we are assembled, has been held the war dance around their council fires, while the surrounding hills echoed their loud whoop; here with impassioned words and startling figures have they made the woods resound with their rude but irresistible eloquence, which, more potent than the peal of the ‘stirring drum,’ and the shrill fife, aroused them to deeds of daring and of valor.

“And when in times of peace, softer passions swayed their hearts, beneath these forest pines, Indian youth have wooed their mates, and with the stars to witness and bless their vows, have pledged perpetual love and constancy.

“But these scenes are all blotted out. The history of centuries is a blank. Oh! could we roll back the oblivious tide and expose to view what other days have witnessed! could we but catch the sound of some soul-stirring song, or the echo of some strain of their simple and glowing eloquence! But it cannot be. Nor song, nor speech can be gathered up. Like the

‘flower that’s born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air,’

they have died in the breeze that wafted them away.”

There is no record to show the exact time when Hampstead was settled. The earliest records of the town commence in January, 1749, with the first meeting under the charter. According to tradition, the first settlement was made in 1728. The venerable man, who ministered to this people so many years, and whose recent death we have so much reason to lament, did more than any one else to preserve the most interesting events in our history. In his “Sketch of Hampstead,”* published in 1835, he remarks,

†Rev. Stephen T. Allen. Taken from his address delivered at the Centennial Celebration of the town of Merrimack, April 3, 1846.

*It is proper here to say, that I am indebted to his “Sketch” for many of the facts here related; also to the town records. Most of the remaining facts were communicated to me by the older inhabitants of the town.

“that three white families, of the name of Ford, Heath and Emerson, moved into the place about the year 1728. Mr. Emerson came from Haverhill, and settled near a brook in the south part of the town. Some of his posterity remain here still, and are among the most respectable inhabitants.”

No additional light has been discovered from a search among the records and papers of the town. Mr. Kelly was always remarkably exact in his statements, and took a commendable degree of pride in collecting such interesting portions of history. I have not been able to learn the place where Mr. Emerson, nor where the other two families settled. But from the fact, that until recently, families of the name of Heath have lived in the east part of the town, and that that part is known to have been early settled, we may conclude that they located in that vicinity.

But another account, from some of our townsmen, states that the first house in Hampstead was built by Mr. Edmund or Peter Morse, who moved from Newbury, Mass., and was the grandfather of Mr. Joseph Morse, and of Samuel Morse, Esq., recently deceased. The house stood in the pasture, about half a mile north-east of the house of Dr. Samuel Morse. A part of the farm is still owned by his descendants. The same account also states that Lieut. Peter Morse was a son of this Mr. Morse, and the first white male person born in town; and that his daughter Judith was the first white female born in Hampstead. The cellar where this house stood is still to be seen. It is divided into two parts, by the foundation of a large chimney. Four pines, from eight to twelve inches in diameter, now stand in the cellar. Near by these ruins is the first burial place of our fathers. There are over a hundred graves, and not a single monument to tell us the names of those who sleep beneath the sod!

Near the eastern shore of this pond* are found the ruins

*The exercises of this celebration were held in the “Davis Grove,” situated on the western shore of the “Wash Pond,” and extending to the water’s edge. The Grove is distant from the ruins of the first settlement, about half a mile, in a direct line.

of the early settlement of the town. It was once the most populous part, the centre of importance. But nothing remains, save the few relics which time has spared. The roughly stoned cellars, the half-filled wells, and the beaten paths to favorite springs, mark the spot where our hardy townsmen first began to clear the land of its heavy growth of wood and timber, erected their rude log houses, and began to undergo the privations of a life in a new settlement.

In this age of security and luxury, we are apt to under-rate the hardships which the first settlers of New England had to encounter. Our soil is a stubborn one and yields a good return only to the most persevering toil. To live in those days, when all a family could get was what it alone could raise from the earth, or fashion with its hands; when neighbors were few and far scattered, and each little household was dependent upon itself almost alone, for help and protection; when the work of years was liable to be destroyed in a single night; when the ruthless savage was continually prowling about each settlement, and in an unguarded moment murdering or carrying into hopeless captivity, women and children; when no farmer felt secure at work in his field, unless armed with his gun; and when even the house of God was the scene of constant alarm from the actual or much dreaded attack of the Indian—to live in those days and to contend with such difficulties, is not the ordinary lot of man.

In reviewing the history of our town, we would gladly turn to the days of our first settlement, and fix on some bright spot of the past. We would picture to ourselves scenes of rural contentment and quiet; the humble log house, half concealed from view by tall maples and graceful elms, alike protected from the heat of summer, and shut in from the cold storms of winter; the cheerful fireside; the honest-minded farmer and his simple-hearted dame, surrounded by a numerous family of stalwart young men and coy maidens, training to become efficient actors

in the great struggle for American Independence. We follow in imagination the hunter in the excitement of the chase, or in his perilous adventures in the extermination of the wild beasts of the forest; we hear the happy voice of the farmer toiling in his field, the quick blows of the woodman's axe, the loud crash of the falling tree, or the clear notes of the laughing, merry voices of children ringing through the woods, echoing across the calm surface of this beautiful pond, and dying away in the thick shade of the trees that covered its opposite shores.

These scenes, we would gladly believe, constituted the routine of their lives. But the reality differs widely from this ideal picture of rural quietness. Toil, severe and unremitting, left them but little leisure to enjoy the more quiet pleasures of modern life. It was their lot to endure the hardships of pioneers in the wilderness. How they fared, what difficulties they encountered, what efforts they made for the promotion of the moral and benevolent institutions which are so peculiar to New England, history tells us not. The names of the great only are enrolled on the books of fame. The historian records the name of the victorious warrior, the illustrious statesman, the eloquent orator, and the accomplished scholar. But the man whose lot it is to live and die upon the spot of his birth, who lives in ignorance of the ways of the world, honestly performs his part in the drama of life, and "bears love to God and good will to man,"—dies lamented in the circle of immediate friends in which he moved; but when they in turn quit all here below, *his memory* perishes too.

With the ruins of the first settlement of this town, fast crumbling to decay, will perish every memento of our earliest history. How forcibly we are reminded of the perishableness of all earthly things! A century and a quarter ago, this town was a wilderness, uninhabited by the white man, and only the occasional resort of the Indian. To-day it is the abode of civilization, of happiness, of peace and plenty. But its first settlers—where are they? They

sleep in the dust ; their very names, with hardly an exception, are lost, and no record remains of their eventful lives.

With a sense of loneliness we ask, " what is the history of man ?" and henceforth there comes the response, " born—living—dead."

"The battle of life is brief,—
The alarm—the struggle—the relief,
Then sleep we side by side."

There is nothing upon the records of the town, or elsewhere, that I have been able to discover, which reveals to us the history of our earliest ancestors. But from the fact that in twenty years from the time of its first settlement, it had become of sufficient importance to be honored with an act of incorporation, we may infer that at least an ordinary degree of success attended the settlement.* No untoward event, probably, interrupted its growth, so that in 1748 the people petitioned the Royal Governor for a town charter, which was granted on the 19th of January, 1749. This instrument appears to have been regarded by our ancestors with a good degree of veneration. It was copied into the first book of Records, and to those at all curious in relics of antiquity, is a matter of interest.

From the " Historical Sketch," by Mr. Kelly, we find that Hampstead is made up of two segments, one from the town of Amesbury, and the other from the town of Haverhill, both being cut off from those towns by running the state line in 1741, and were thereby included within the Province of New Hampshire. It was called, originally, Timber Lane, " on account of its being an elevated, hard tract of land, and from the abundance of timber of the most valuable kinds, which rendered it a place of considerable resort." It was named Hampstead, after a pleasant village of that name in the county of Middlesex,

*It was a far more difficult thing at that time to plant a small colony, and cause it to flourish, than it is at the present day, to build up a large city, or cause thriving villages to spring up, by enchantment almost, out of the midst of a thriving and industrious people. The largest city in this state, 11 years ago, contained less than a thousand inhabitants; in the compact part of it, where is now found a thriving population of 14000 souls, there then stood but three houses and dwelt about a score of people. At the present day this wonderful increase is not uncommon. A century ago it required time to lay the foundation of a permanent settlement.

in England, five miles north of London. The town was so named by Governor Wentworth. The island in this town was reserved by him for his farm. This Island must formerly have been a place of considerable note. All accounts agree in saying that the Governor reserved it for his own use. No such reservation appears in the Charter. It would, perhaps, be more proper to say that he owned the Island in his own right, in the same way that any private individual owned his own farm. The buildings erected upon the Island, must, in their day, have been considered of a superior kind. One of the houses was evidently intended for the occasional residence of the Governor, and the other according to the English custom, was of a poorer kind, and devoted to the use of his domestics. Notwithstanding the buildings have been suffered to go to decay, there are yet enough traces of improvement remaining, to render the spot one of the most beautiful places in the state. It was formerly called "Governor's Island." As it is wanting in a name at this time, a return to the old name would be very appropriate.

In granting the Charter, the King reserved to himself, his "heirs and successors, forever, all white pine trees, growing and being, or that shall grow and be, on said tract of land, fit for the use of his Royal Navy." Such a reservation was usual at that time, but it has availed the poor King and his succeesors but little. Since we threw off the yoke of British allegiance, his successors have been forced to look elsewhere for materials for the "Royal Navy," and England, twice humbled in her haughty pride, has found a powerful rival on the shores of America.

In accordance with the provisions of the Charter, the first public meeting was warned to assemble for the purpose of organizing under it, by Daniel Little, Esq. The warrant is one of which we may, as townsmen, well be proud. It is so indicative of the character of our New England ancestors, that I cannot forbear copying it.

" These are to warn ye freeholders and other inhabitants of ye town of Hampstead, qualified to vote in ye choice of Town Officers, to meet at ye New Meeting House in Hampstead on ye first Wednesday of February next at 10 of ye clock in ye forenoon for ye following particulars, viz :

1st. To choose town officers as ye law directs.

2d. To see what ye said Town will do in order to make ye Meeting House more comfortable for ye public worship of God, and also to choose a committee to take care of ye same.

3dly. To consider and act what shall be thought best about ye place proposed for six pews in ye new tier in ye front of said Meeting House.

4thly. To choose a Committee to provide a minister to preach among us in order for settling amongst us, or what ye town may think most proper.

Dated at Hampstead, Jan'y 24, 1749.

DANIEL LITTLE, *Justice of the Peace.*

The people were notified to assemble in the *New Meeting House*. This is the same building which is now used for a town house and occasionally for religious services. It cannot be determined, certainly, when it was built. From the best information, we are led to believe that it was raised about the year 1745. It was probably built at the town's expense, as they seem by the records to have exercised exclusive control over it, in selling the pews, making repairs and taking care of it.

The building that first served them for a place of worship must have been small, and of that kind universally erected by the Puritans when they first settled in New England. It was located on the spot where "Spiggot Hall," (recently so named,) is now situated. Nothing remains to tell us when it was erected, nor how long it was used. It was probably built of hewn logs, in the simplest manner, without porch or ornament, and without any pretensions to beauty or finish, after the mode of architecture then prevailing in New England. Rough boards or logs constituted the pews, and the pulpit was scarcely any thing better. A gallery for the choir was unheard of, or at least unthought of, being considered a dangerous innovation upon Puritan simplicity. As was their custom at those times, the hymn was "deaconed out" a line at a time, (for hymn books were a luxury which they could ill afford,)

all the congregation, who chose, joined in the singing; a mode of praising God, often more in accordance with the real feelings of the heart, than the elegant, finished, but too frequently unmeaning way, in which the *select* choirs of the present day, perform this delightful duty.

The first Meeting House must have been extremely uncomfortable in the winter season; its walls were unplastered, and fires were out of the question, stoves being a thing unheard of, in such a place. The building too, was erected when the population was small in numbers, and would not accommodate the increasing wants of the people.

From these considerations, they determined to erect a new and more commodious place of worship. The new house, which they constructed, reflects great credit upon them, for what must then have been considered an elegant and beautiful structure. It was built of durable materials and for over a century has withstood the ravages of time. In convenience of arrangement, in the simplicity of its model, and in the beauty of its proportions, it stands a monument of Puritan skill and energy and of Puritan faith.

The house was not put in its present shape, till near the close of the eighteenth century, when the porch and steeple were added, and the house thoroughly repaired. Even the windows were not all glazed, nor the doors all hung until some years after the frame was covered; and it was many years before its walls were plastered. The limited means of our fathers would not permit them to finish it, as fast as they desired or as convenience demanded.

The erection of this house was considered by them indispensable. It was no mercenary motive that led our fathers to leave "Old England's" shores, encounter the perils of the deep, and endure the privations of a life in the wilderness. It must have been a strong and enduring love for religion and a perfect faith in God, that induced our Puritan mothers to sever the ties of kindred and nation, to leave parents and friends—all behind—and find in the

wilds and severe climate of New England, a place to worship God in security, "according to the dictates of their own consciences;" to find a refuge from persecution, and an asylum for the despised Pilgrim. It was a strong and abiding love in God, that could induce our fathers and mothers to leave the luxuries and pleasures of *home*—that word, the mention of which, calls up in our memories a thousand pleasing associations,—and to settle in lands which would be continually harassed by Indian warfare, and attended with such "sure destruction of property, and life, and hope." "There was no face which did not gather paleness, and no heart which did not bleed at every pore. Everything in life was held and enjoyed in fearful uncertainty. The fond mother, with her infant in her arms, held him in perpetual fear. She felt that inward terror, that beating and throbbing of nature within the heart, which she only can know, who is nursing her infant for slaughter." Hearts that could put their trust in the Lord and brave dangers like these, more terrible, because uncertain, and attended with unheard of barbarity, must have been imbued with a perfect love of God. It no longer, then, excites our wonder, that every infant settlement had its sanctuary, that New England has become world renowned for its religion, its learning, and its enterprise. Its ten thousand church spires, reaching upward toward Heaven, point with unerring accuracy, to the cause of its superiority in morality and prosperity.

Happily our own town never was the scene of Indian massacre and cruelty. But its vicinity to other places, which in an unsuspecting moment, became scenes of bloodshed, must have kept them in perpetual suspense. "Husbands and wives, parents and children, nightly retired to rest in safety, sunk together into silence, doubting ever to rise again."

The same people came to settle this town, and possessed the same undying love for God, and the same unyielding spirit to persecution. The strong love for the sanctuary,

and sanctuary privileges, which they implanted in our breasts, is the richest legacy they could have bequeathed us. It outshines in splendor and in richness, "the wealth of Ormus and of Ind." It is no mean heritage to be the descendants of such people. Well may we quote with pride the first warrant for the meeting of the free-holders, when every line but one was penned, to take measures for the enjoyment of increased privileges in the worship of God, and to provide a permanent preacher of His word.

The erection of their new Meeting House, was an important era in their history. It is unfortunate that there is no authentic record of it extant. Allow me to quote the language used upon an occasion similar to this.*

"It was apparent that it was in their hearts to build a house unto the Lord. At length the work went on. The forest, dense and heavy, that then entirely surrounded the destined location, resounded with the woodman's axe. The oaks hard by,—venerable with the growth of centuries,—were felled and fitted for their place;" at length, "the day, so long an object of pious desire on the part of some, and of wakeful interest among all, had arrived. At an early hour in the morning from the remotest borders of the town, the men are gathering. All are prompt and ready to act their several parts in a scene, than which none, perhaps, more joyous had ever before occurred in the history of the town. None of the actors survive to recount what transpired on that memorable day. We know, however that the raising of a Meeting House was an event of no ordinary interest. But in these days of progress and rapid execution, when villages rise up like mushrooms, and Meeting Houses, comfortably provided with all fixtures, can be furnished at short notice, we can but imperfectly imagine the excitement that thrilled the infant settlement on the occasion in question.

"The morning of the day, we may well suppose, found their domestic matters done up in season, and we seem to

*Rev. Mr. Allen.

see them setting off,—the active and the able bodied, with their implements in hand,—the housewives neatly attired in their checkered aprons, on foot or on pillion, — the beardless, vaunting young men and coy maidens, in Sunday dress,—all wending their way to the central point of interest, where, doubtless, in due time, were assembled nearly all of the three hundred population in town.

“What deeds of strength and agility, in handling beams and rafters,—what skill in tilting and catching pins—what hair-breadth escapes,—what presumtuious adventures in walking the giddy ridgepole,—what notes of alarm from prudent mothers and careful wives,—it is not for us to report. Nor would it be of interest, at this late period, to speak of the closing scenes of that day. It is enough to remark, that, as after the consecration of the Temple, Solomon held a feast, and all Israel with him, and on the eighth day sent the people away, and they came to their tents joyfully and glad of heart; so no doubt abundant provision had been made for “all those creature comforts, *once—but not now*, deemed indispensable at a raising.

“The massive frame thus went up, without any accident to mar the happiness of the occasion; and there it has stood,” more than “a century, defying the fierce blasts of winter, and the progress of decay,—and seems even now, capable, with proper care, of lasting a century more. Though it has been taken from sacred, and appropriated to secular uses,—though it stands solitary and alone, and seems without and within like one forsaken,—yet, who can pass it by,” “without emotion?” It is of New England architecture. “It is a Puritan structure.” * * * “Centuries to come will approve and applaud the New England men, who worshipped in square pews, and the New England ministers, who preached with a subduing power from high pulpits.”

The first town meeting was held on the 7th day of February, 1749* Daniel Little was chosen moderator,

*This was in Old Style. According to our chronology, it would be eleven days later. This remark will also apply to the date of our town charter.

and had the honor of holding the first elective office in town. Peter Eastman was elected Town Clerk, to which office he was annually elected, with but two exceptions, till 1776. Nathaniel Heath was chosen Constable but not wishing to serve, hired Ebenezer Gile to take his place, and the town accepted the substitute. A board of five Selectmen was chosen, either because it was the custom to choose that number, or because they thought five would be more prompt to serve the town well, than three. The board consisted of John Johnson, Lieut. Peter Morse, George Little, Jacob Bayley and Stephen Johnson. The other offices were all filled, no doubt, by good men. Joseph Stevens and John Beard were elected Hogreeves. If the custom then prevailed, as at the present time, of choosing the newly married to that office, we are led to infer that Joseph Stevens and John Beard had recently worshipped at the altar of Hymen. It is certainly a custom of long standing. The office was not then, as now, a nominal one; its duties were often onerous. Perhaps the custom owes its origin to the playful desire upon the part of the community at large, to render this naturally embarrassing period of the newly wedded couple's life, more embarrassing by thus drawing to the happy groom, the attention of the whole town. There may be something peculiar in matrimony itself, that renders him a suitable person to have charge of the swine running at large, and makes him emphatically "master of the ring." Or, by *ringing* the nose of the unfortunate pig, he may see a foreboding of what is to be his own fate, unless he shall float down the stream of wedded life more safely than sometimes happens. The question will, probably never be settled upon strictly political principles.

Some action was taken at this meeting for securing a settled minister. But from a defect in the records, it does not appear what action was had. From the fact that a minister was settled three years afterward, in 1752, it is probable that this meeting prepared the way for future

success, though its action at that time did not result in anything definite.

At the annual meeting in 1750, among other things, it was voted to "hire a schoolmaster for six months in ye summer season, to teach ye children, to read and write." We may point to this vote with great pleasure. That a town, which had been settled only twenty-one years, and had, probably, less than three hundred inhabitants, should be at the expense of sustaining the school half the year, was an act which forms one of the brightest spots in our history. The next distinguishing feature, in the policy adopted by our fathers, to the noble example they set in the worship of God, is our system of Common Schools.

The men who settled New England, entertained correct ideas of true glory. They had been schooled in adversity and had learned to estimate truly human greatness and human power. They knew that "knowledge is power." In the ignorance and superstition that shrouded the Old World in error, shut out the glad light of liberty, and fastened upon Europe the badges of the most despotic governments, they saw the destiny that awaited them in their new homes, unless they should lay deep the foundations of knowledge. They knew that freedom, without knowledge, was but another name for slavery. The arrogant assumption of the Papal authority, the bitter unrelenting cruelty of the Dark Ages, their own persecutions by their own firesides, served to make them strive more zealously, to establish what they conceived to be the truth. Our fathers saw the degradation of the masses of the Old World, and resolved that no such heritage should be the lot of their children. At the same time they erected their own dwellings, they also erected the school house.

When they established the Common School system, they performed an act, whose influence will reach down through all time. Had it not been for the *intelligence* of the men of 1776, America had never been free. Had it not been for Common Schools, our enterprise would not whiten

every sea with the sails of our ships; our commerce would not extend to the most distant ports; our fabrics would not compete so successfully with those of more favored climes; our glorious Union itself would not have stood so long, unshaken by the dangers which threaten it without and within.

Cæsar, the hero of three hundred battles, the subjugator of eight hundred cities, the conqueror of three millions of people, one million of whom he slew in battle, has, indeed rendered his name immortal. But long after the influence of his deeds shall have ceased to be felt, when his name shall be remembered only to be associated with scenes of cruelty, shall the humble, unpretending acts of the Pilgrims move the mighty masses that shall come after them.

The greatest foe to tyranny is knowledge. Millions, yet unborn, will unite to bless the men "who broke the magic spell of ignorance and of error."

We do not feel the full weight of the debt of gratitude, which we owe to the memory of our fathers. Not till we contrast our fortune with that of the millions of Europe, who are now struggling to burst the bonds that have so long held them in ignorance, and in humiliating dependence upon the nobility, can we feel the superiority of our condition.

How different is the condition of Common Schools at the present day from what it was one hundred years ago! Then the town voted to hire a teacher for six months, to teach only reading and writing. So limited a course of education at this day, would hardly be thought a very great accomplishment. But their effort for the education of the rising generation will seem a noble one when we consider that then almost the whole world was buried in ignorance, that only here and there did the bright rays of knowledge illumine the face of the earth, that then people considered the possession of knowledge beyond their reach and forbore to strive after it, that one century ago the world was groping in the dark,—all knowl-

edge of the truth effectually shut out from the minds of the people, except when imparted through the medium of men whose interest it was to keep the masses in ignorance. Even in 1750 our town, would compare favorably with the condition of many parts of our country at the present time. In our southern and western states, there is many an individual who can neither read nor write. But an hundred years ago, it was not a common thing to find a New Englander who could not do both.

There are many yet living who can count their whole term of "schooling" by weeks, who traveled miles to school, and thought themselves fortunate to enjoy such privileges. The school houses of that time were wanting in almost every convenience, and possessed none of the luxuries of modern times. Though often hardly worthy the name of a school house, often containing only a single room, cold and uncomfortable, amid the miniature snow banks, which crept stealthily in between the crevices of the hewn logs, and through the cheerless days of winter, were educated as brave men and noble hearts as ever lived.

The Testament was then the only reading and spelling book known, and a copy-book consisted of a few leaves of the roughest paper. To this limited list of studies Arithmetic was soon added. At first no text book was used. Such examples as would come up in the ordinary course of a man's business, were given out by the teacher and the four fundamental rules taught orally. In time, Pike's Arithmetic made its appearance, grew into general favor, and for a long time remained in exclusive use. But that, like everything else, must give place to improvement. Then followed Welch's, Adams' Old, and New, Colburn's, and lastly, to the honor of our town, the analytical, thorough and concise treatise, by one of Hampstead's most distinguished sons.* The rapidity with which it grew into general favor, the extensive

*The North American Arithmetic, in three parts, by Frederick Emerson, Instructor in Boston.

adoption of it in most of our schools, and the success with which it maintained its favor with the public in face of the most persevering competition, is proof, stronger than words, of its real merits.

There is not time to notice all the improvements introduced into our schools. What distrust accompanied the introduction of new studies, what wry faces were made over the unintelligible pages of Murray, what bitter tears were shed over hard, half-learned tasks, and what fear of blistered hands or smarting limbs,—we leave for other pens on different occasions.

It is proper, however, to allude to the important changes that have taken place in reading books. The New Testament was, at first, the only reading book used. But from the sacredness of the book, and on account of its being ill adapted to the capacities of different ages, it was superseded by other books. The American Preceptor, and, for a long time also, the English Reader, were favorite text-books. In the improvements of the age, these books gave way to a series well adapted to the different ages and capacities of youth, by another distinguished son of Hampstead.† For several years the town honored him by the exclusive adoption of his books. But the love for new things is irresistible, and Emerson's Reading books have been partially laid aside, to make room for other candidates for public favor. The same author has furnished to the world a simple, neat, well arranged and correct spelling book,‡ which has been exclusively adopted in the schools in this town for nearly twenty years. The hundreds of editions that have been published, its almost universal adoption in schools, and the long time it has been in use, are sure guaranties of its worth. The rival, that can supplant it, must present the strongest claims of excellence.

The man who publishes a book for Common School

†Benjamin D. Emerson, Esq., Roxbury, Mass.

‡Emerson's National Spelling Book.

use, wields a mighty influence. The character of his book operates upon the mind when it is most susceptible of bias. It is the duty of the people, then, to look into the character of the instruments, which aid in forming the most lasting impressions the youthful mind ever receives.

I believe no other town has the honor of being the birth place of men, whose school books have been so universally approved and adopted. This fact, together with the esteem with which we have always regarded them, must be my apology for alluding to what, at first sight, might not seem strictly appropriate to the occasion.

Our fathers had not the advantages which we enjoy. The town in 1750, contained but one district, and according to the terms of the vote, the school was to be sustained only in the summer season. Its advantages could not, therefore, have been extensive. The great distance must have excluded most of the smaller children, and the duties of the farm and of the dairy, in the busiest season, must have deprived many of the elder children from attending. The first attempts in other parts, of New England, to establish schools, were attended with similar inconveniences, and produced only the same limited advantages. But from this small germ, has grown up around us our strongest bulwark of defence. It is the cause of our unexampled prosperity. In vain will bigotry or infidelity attempt to undermine our security, while our system of Common Schools is cherished as one of the most efficient aids to religion, and national prosperity. The foundation of all prosperity is in an enlightened community. An ignorant people, though inhabiting the most favored land on earth, soon sinks into insignificance. Our extended sea-coast invites the merchant to traverse the ocean for trade with every clime. Our fertile valleys have given employment to the agriculturalist. Our numerous water-falls have attracted the enterprising manufacturer. "Cities spring up like exhalations, under the

magic touch of his wand, and the hum of machinery arises out of the midst of a thrifty, industrious and happy people."

The majestic plains and rivers of the West have collected adventurers from every part of the world. Our country exhibits to other nations the unexampled rise and prosperity of a free, self-governed, and *educated* people. The Common School system has been one of the most effective means in producing these magic changes. Its benefits and its inevitable results are arguments which come directly home to the hearts and understandings of the great body of the people. To the foresight and wisdom of the pilgrims, are we indebted for this rich legacy. With what care and anxiety, then, should we cherish it, so that we may hand it down to those who shall come after us, not only untarnished, but in our hands made the instrument of increased good.

Time forbids indulging in any further reflections, to which so fruitful a subject invites our attention. The remaining events in our town's history must be rapidly run over.

At this time there appears to have been some trouble concerning the Parsonage lands. The Proprietors of Haverhill granted to the inhabitants of Timber Lane, a tract of land "for ye use of ye first minister who should settle here." At this meeting in 1750, it was voted "that Esq. Little, Capt. Copps and John Webster, should be a committee to agree with Thos. Haynes to go off ye Parsonage land, if they can do it on reasonable terms." This committee was unsuccessful in effecting a settlement with Mr. Haynes. It is not easy to ascertain wherein the difficulty consisted. The dispute was about the title. At different meetings the town chose committees to prosecute the trespassers, or to settle with them, or to refer the matter. So many votes were passed and reconsidered, that it is not possible to ascertain how the matter was finally adjusted. The last vote upon the town

records, is to give it to any one to hold in fee simple, who will take up the case and prosecute it to final judgment. Probably some amicable adjustment was made, which secured the lands to the town.*

An article was inserted in the warrant "to see if ye town would give Mr. Merriam a call to settle as a gospel minister in ye town." From a defect in the records, it cannot be ascertained what was done.

In August, 1750, at a meeting holden for the purpose, a committee was chosen "to supply ye pulpit, with ye advice of ye neighboring ministers." A similar vote was passed in 1751. The town thus had preaching most of the time. At a meeting held on the 25th day of February, 1752, the town voted to "choose and elect Mr. Henry True, to settle with us in ye work of ye ministry." "Voted to give Mr. True for his annual salary £450, each of ye two first years, in money, old tenor, or equal to it in money; and after ye two first years are expired, then £500 a year, of ye like money, during ye time he continues to carry on ye work of ye ministry amongst us, in this town of Hampstead." At an adjourned meeting, they voted, as an additional inducement for him to come, "£1000, o. t., one-half in bills of credit, and ye other half in labor and materials for building—also, twenty cords of wood, annually, after he hath a family. Also, ye peaceable possession of ye land, granted by the proprietors of Haverhill, to ye first minister who should settle in Timber Lane." To the call of the town, and this liberal offer, Mr. True returned a letter of acceptance.

Mr. True came from Salisbury, Mass. He was graduated at Harvard College in 1750, and was ordained June 24, 1752, and continued in the ministry almost thirty years, till his death. "He always maintained the character of a *good man*, (says Rev. Mr. Kelly,) "agreeably to the

*Since the above was delivered, I have learned that the above named lands do not make a part of the present Parsonage. They are situated on the west road leading from Mr. Daniel Emerson's to the Wadley Corner. Rev. Henry True, soon after his settlement, sold out his interest for a mere song, and the purchaser made a very profitable investment of his money.

text, Acts 11:24, which Rev. Edward Barnard of Haverhill preached from, at his ordination. During the first half of his ministry, no clergyman was more highly esteemed or better treated by the people than he was. As his family increased, they added to his salary; the whole sum that the people gave him, over his regular salary, was nearly \$3000, and this was when the daily wages of selectmen were only two shillings. But toward the close of his ministry, they cut down his salary, for several years to \$200 a year. Other ministers came into the place, and by their zealous and loud speaking, produced great commotion, but no revival among the people, who were very sanguine and versatile in their opinions. This did not unsettle the good minister, nor sully his character in the view of any man, but it reduced his salary and the number of his hearers so that after his decease, the people were in trouble." For many years, in consequence of a division amongst themselves, they attempted, unsuccessfully, to settle a new minister.

In 1755, during the old French War, Mr. True went into the army as chaplain; also, again in 1762. In a letter to his wife, dated July 11th, at Crown Point, he gives an interesting account of matters occurring in the camp; he speaks of the great drought which was so fatal to the crops that year. His connection with the army does not appear to have been marked by any striking events. After remaining there the appointed time, he returned to his family and people.

Mr. True died suddenly on the 22d of May, 1782, in the fifty-seventh year of his age. It was on the Sabbath, just as he was ready to leave his house for the house of God, to preach as usual, when, with scarcely a moment's warning, he was called to "a tabernacle not made with hands," to spend an eternal Sabbath of rest.

Mr. True was the means of doing much good; his influence is felt to this day. He left a numerous family of children, who settled in different parts of our land;

and carried with them the habits and virtues, which their father instilled into their minds in their youth.

Dr. Jabez True, his son, was one of the first settlers of Ohio; he led a life of more than ordinary usefulness. He died in 1823, at the age of sixty-three. His memory is still cherished by the descendants of the early pioneers of that great state, for his universal charity, simplicity of manners, and sincere piety.

Rev. Henry True, another son, was, for many years, settled in the state of Maine, and now, in his old age, is enjoying the consciousness of having lived a useful life, and is commanding the veneration and respect of every one.

The people of this town can bear testimony to the life of usefulness, which another of the family has led. Her visits of mercy to the sick, her sympathy for the poor and distressed, her disinterested zeal in works of charity and benevolence, have endeared her to us with many ties of affection.

In 1753, the town offered a bounty of four pounds on every wolf killed in the town. An incident which occurred about this time, was the cause of the passage of this vote. Lieut. Peter Morse was tending a coal pit upon his land at some distance from his house. At night when ready to return to his family, he found himself surrounded by several wolves. He was obliged to pass a long and sleepless night in the forest, and saved his life only by continually throwing firebrands at them.

Every vestige of the wilderness has long been removed. Among the most vexatious and often calamitous annoyances, which were continually harrassing our ancestors, was the attack of wild beasts upon their flocks.

The warrant for the annual meeting in 1756 commences with the caption,—“Province of New Hampshire. In His Majesty’s name, you are required to meet,” &c. This caption was used this year for the first time, and was continued till the commencement of the Revolution-

ary War, when it was changed to "Colony of New Hampshire. In the name of the Government and People, you are notified," &c. After the formation of the Constitution, it was again changed to "State of New Hampshire. In the name of said State, you are," &c. These changes of captions, though considered small matters in themselves, serve to show how ready the people were to renounce all allegiance to the King of England.

In 1758, a committee was chosen to defend a suit brought by the town of Kingston against Hampstead. The difficulty continued eight years, before it was settled. Before the State line was run in 1741, Hampstead, as now constituted, belonged mostly to Haverhill. But a small portion of the eastern part of the town, which went by the name of Amesbury Peak, was claimed, both by Kingston and Amesbury, although the latter town exercised jurisdiction over the territory. Kingston then comprehended all that is now called Kingston, East Kingston, Danville and Sandown, and being incorporated fifty-five years before Hampstead, would also embrace the disputed territory, after the running of the State line. Though that town had slept fifty-five years, before the incorporation of Hampstead, and eleven years after its incorporation, yet in 1760, "they at last waked up, and fell upon this town with redoubled force, with writ after writ." These lawsuits caused the town a good deal of trouble, and many meetings were called for the purpose of settling the difficulty, or defending the suits. At one time the town voted to pay Kingston one thousand pounds, old tenor, and costs, which must have amounted to a round sum. There is another vote to pay Kingston twelve hundred pounds, and still another to pay three thousand pounds. But it is difficult to say whether the town ever paid Kingston anything except the costs. At this state of the difficulty, the Governor interfered, and compromised the matter, by a grant to Kingston, of a tract of land near the Connecticut River. The new

township was named Unity, because the granting of it made peace between Hampstead and Kingston. The settlement was finally effected in 1776. It would be very fortunate if all difficulties arising out of disputed territories, could be settled as amicably as this was.*

In 1762, the town voted "to keep the meeting house doors shut against all such preachers, whose principles and conduct are such, that neither Congregational nor Presbyterian churches amongst us can hold communion with, or admit as preachers." From the testimony of Mr. Kelly, "almost all the followers of the new preachers became downright infidels, of which, it is believed, this town had more than any other then known in the State. They sowed the seeds of wickedness so much, that their pernicious influence was felt for many years afterwards, by the goodly number of sober people, who then had no minister to speak the word of truth, and break the bread of life to them."

This account should be taken with some grains of allowance. Mr. Kelly wrote with all the prejudices of a zealous minister of the eighteenth century. The Puritans looked with jealousy upon any sect of Christians other than their own. The people of this town partook fully of that feeling, and very probably, opposed the new creed springing up around them, so bitterly, as to cause those who were indifferent to any particular creed in religion, to sympathise with the persecuted. This is always the result of bitter opposition. Often, the surest way to put down error, is to leave it unnoticed. If the doctrine has merits of its own, it will stand upon them alone, and if it is really an error, it will fall and destroy itself in its own ruins.

The pay of Selectmen, about this time, was two shillings per day, lawful money. The town, at the annual meeting voted what compensation the Selectmen for the

*"Historical Sketch of Hampstead." The above account by Mr. Kelly is the only statement to be found of the Kingston difficulty.

year previous should receive. Sometimes they voted to pay them nothing. This was not a very complimentary estimate of the value of their services, but if our public servants at the present day should be paid for the good they actually do perform, they would, undoubtedly, be more active to perform their duties faithfully, and less eager to sustain the burdens of public office.

Our town has had its share of public calamities. In 1737, in the latter part of the winter, large numbers of cattle died from scarcity of hay; and many families suffered extremely from want of bread. In 1738, "there was a remarkable worm, which ate the leaves from the oak trees. Other vegetation also suffered." "In 1741, the winter was colder than almost any man ever before knew in New England." In 1749, was the greatest drought ever known in the land. One person writes, "that five acres of good land, newly laid down, produced but one load of hay. That he mowed several days, and could not cut two hundred a day." Some people cut down trees for their cattle to browse, and many sent to Virginia for hay. The corn crop yielded well that year, else their sufferings must have been severe. In 1756, a malignant fever prevailed, which swelled the number of deaths to thirty. In a population of three hundred, this was a fearful mortality. These calamities are, however, too well known to require any further notice.

The circumstances of procuring the bell in this town are attended with some interest. Dea. Thomas Huse, of West Newbury, Mass., in 1809, owned and lived upon the Island. He was a particular friend of Mr. Kelly, and said to him one day, "you have a steeple here, and need a bell. If you will go to Mr. George Holbrook, of Brookfield, and speak for a bell, I will pay for it." The bell was accordingly procured and brought upon the ground before any man in Hampstead knew anything about it, except the two who had been spoken to, to make the frame. It was first suspended from a limb of the old oak

tree, in this neighborhood, and rung, much to the surprise of all the people, who had not been apprised of the event;* a very harmless and agreeable way of perpetrating a joke.†

It is worthy of note, that there are seven farms in this town, that have remained in the same families over one hundred years.‡ It is an old and familiar adage, "there's no place like home;" these farms, then, must be doubly dear to their present owners. The reminiscences of childhood, and the scenes enacted around these hearth-stones of their fathers, render these places dear to them, with a thousand ties of affection.

At a special meeting of the town, called on the twentieth of December, 1774, it was voted "that the money called for from this town, in order to support the expense of the Delegates of the General Congress sent by this Province, shall be paid out of the town stock." "Also, that a Committee of Inspection be chosen to regard the conduct of the people, touching the association of the General Congress."

At a special meeting held July fifteenth, 1776, it was voted "to raise a sum of money, sufficient to hire thirteen men, sent for by Col. Gale, as the proportion of this town, to join the Continental Army under Gen. Sullivan, at Canada, or at Crown Point." "Voted to set aside and excuse all those persons, who have done a turn in the war the last year, or their proportion of a turn in said war, from paying any part." The town also chose a committee to hire and enlist the thirteen men called

*Many of the foregoing facts and statements are found in the "Sketch of Hampstead," before alluded to.

†The following extract is taken from the deed of conveyance by Dea. Huse:

"I Thomas Huse of Hampstead, &c. in consideration of the love and good will, and affection which I have and bear to the inhabitants of the town of Hampstead in general, and to the Congregational Church and Society in particular, and with a view and desire to unite a spirit of liberality, and to promote good order, harmony and peace in the said town of Hampstead, have given, granted, and confirmed, and by these presents do give, grant and confirm unto the said town of Hampstead, for the use and benefit of said inhabitants in general, and for the use and benefit of said Church and Society in particular,—forever—a certain meeting-house bell now on the meeting house in said Hampstead, made by George Holbrook, at Brookfield, Mass. * *"—*Records of Hampstead, Vol. 2, pp. 62-3.*

‡These farms are either owned or occupied by the following persons, respectively, viz: Mr. Jonathan Williams; Heirs of John H. Clark, who died the present season; Mr. Caleb Hadley; Mr. Samuel Wood; Mr. Moses Atwood; Mr. Amasa Eastman; and Widow Mary Calef.

for, and empowered them to procure money for the payment of the soldiers.

This meeting was held either immediately upon the reception of the news of the Declaration of Independence or a few days prior, and when that instrument was the general subject of thought and conversation. It shows that ours was not behind other towns, in responding to the action of Congress. Committees of Inspection were chosen at various times, during the war.

In 1777, another draft was made upon this town, "for men to join the Continental Army under Col. Bartlett." The town immediately voted to send the men, and joined the Selectmen with the commissioned officers, to procure them.

In December, 1777, John Calfe was chosen a "Representative to act in the General Assembly to be holden at Exeter, with *full power* to transact such measures as the Assembly might judge necessary for the public good; and also, to choose delegates to the Continental Congress." Mr. Calfe was annually chosen to represent the town, till our present Constitution was adopted. The unlimited power entrusted to him, speaks volumes in favor of his integrity, and of the confidence the people reposed in him. It also shows that this town was ready to perform its share in the great Revolution to be effected on this Continent. Many other towns would not empower their delegates with full authority, from a distrust of the expediency of many of the measures then proposed, but which time has proved to have been wisely enacted.

In 1778, a Committee was chosen "to provide for the families of those that had gone into the army for the town of Hampstead." At the annual meeting in 1778, it was voted, even in anticipation, "to procure the soldiers that might be called for during the year." In 1779 it was voted "to allow those soldiers that were for and from this town, something for their losses in their retreat from Tianteroga, [Ticonderoga, (?)] in 1777."

At a special meeting, in May, 1779, they voted "to procure the men, (five in number,) then called for, and also to raise more men, if called for that year." Again in July, another meeting was called and new measures taken to procure men to join the New Hampshire battalion; and also to procure men to go to Rhode Island, to join the army there. At this time the paper currency, issued by Congress, had depreciated so much, as to be almost worthless. The people of Portsmouth met to consider what remedy could best be applied. Their consultation resulted in fixing a price for all articles of merchandise, which should be uniform throughout the state. The Selectmen of Portsmouth issued Circulars to the different towns, asking their co-operation. At a special meeting this town "voted to come into the plan adopted by Portsmouth, provided three-fourths of the other towns should do the same." The adoption of this plan, necessarily resulted in great pecuniary sacrifices.

There are many other interesting votes passed during the Revolution,* but enough have been noticed, to show that this town took an active part in that great struggle. There was no time during the war when it did not furnish its full quota of men. Its money was freely given, and its men willingly sent forth to fight the battles of a common country. In Rhode Island, on the shores of Lake George, and at Crown Point, are entombed the ashes of our townsmen. In common with the rest of our country, our ancestors were aroused by the insults and injuries heaped upon them by England. They fought against powerful odds. In the darkest periods of the Revolution, the hardy yeomanry flocked around the standard of America, and wrested from the hands of our mother land, the power which she vainly asserted. In the eloquent language of another† "those were times that tried men's souls, and never, in

*There are other votes recorded in the town books, passed during the difficulty with France, in the presidency of John Adams. Also, similar votes passed during the war of 1812.

†Wirt's Life of Patrick Henry.

any age, or in any country, did there exist a race of men, whose souls were better fitted for the trial. Patient in suffering, firm in adversity, calm and collected amid the dangers which pressed around them, cool in council and brave in battle, they were worthy of the cause and the cause was worthy of them." In their privations and wrongs, "the sufferers were upheld by that kind of holy fortitude, which enabled the christian martyrs to smile amidst the flames, and to triumph, even in the agonies of death." * * * "Every grade of society, all ages, and both sexes, kindled in this sacred competition of patriotism. The *Ladies* of the Colonies, in the dawn, and throughout the whole progress of the Revolution, shone with pre-eminent lustre, in this war of fortitude and self-denial. They renounced, without a sigh, the use of the luxuries, and even of the comforts, to which they had been accustomed, and felt a nobler pride in appearing dressed in the simple productions of their own looms, than they had ever experienced from glittering in the brightest ornaments of the East."

If *our* fathers and mothers did not occupy so prominent a place in the great drama of the Revolution, as others who lived nearer the scenes of active operations, it was not because they lacked brave and patriotic spirits. They contributed their full quota of the honest yeomanry, that composed our bravest troops. They freely gave of their fortunes to promote the sacred cause; they protected from hunger and danger, the wives and little ones of those who had gone manfully forth to the fight. In that day, America knew no distinction of rank or person. It was a common cause, for the common good. The humblest soldier in that war, if animated with the same patriotic feelings, *deserves* and *receives* the same grateful remembrance from posterity. What though his name be lost! What though every trace of his life's history be destroyed! He performed well his part in life, and the influence of his acts will descend through all

time, and incite other men, in other ages, to the same noble struggles to become free, even as now the cowering millions of Europe are striving to break the tyranny of power;—even as the noble Hungarians are contending for life and liberty against the allied despotic powers of Austria and Russia.

It is proper to notice, though, from necessity, briefly, the principal men of our town.

Richard Hazzen came from Haverhill, Mass., and was among the first settlers. He was graduated at Harvard College in 1717. In 1741, he was one of the principal Surveyors in running the line between this State and Massachusetts. He died suddenly in October 1754. He was a useful and trustworthy citizen and was so esteemed by his fellow townsmen. He was so well known and prominent that he is mentioned on the records simply as Mr. Hazzen, his Christian name being omitted.

Daniel Little, Esq., also came from Haverhill. By the authority given him in the town charter, he called the first town meeting, for the purpose of organizing. He was often chosen Selectman, and placed upon important committees, and was a valuable and influential citizen. He died in 1777, at the good old age of 86, lamented by all his fellow townsmen. His descendants compose a numerous and valuable part of our present population. His son Samuel was a Justice of the Peace, often one the Selectmen, and frequently filled other important offices in town. Another son, Rev. Daniel Little, was the first minister of Kennebunk, Maine; and preached in this town before the settlement of Mr. True. He was a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and had the honorary degree of A. M. conferred upon him at Harvard College.

Gen. Jacob Bayley resided in this town several years. He came from Newbury, Mass., and was a very enterprising man. After living here several years he went as a leading man, and settled in Newbury, Vt., which

town he named after his native place. He was distinguished as an officer in the Revolutionary War.

Capt. John Hazzen, who was born in Haverhill, Mass., and was nephew to Richard Hazzen, also, was a man of enterprise. After living in this town several years, he removed to settle in Haverhill of this State, which place he named after the place of his nativity.

Hon. Charles Johnson was another very worthy man, who went from this place with Capt. Hazzen, as one of the first and most valuable men in that company.

Hon. John Calfe, born in Newbury, Mass., came to this town from Kingston, N. H. He was a descendant of the celebrated Robert Calfe, a merchant of Boston, who so strenuously withstood the measures of the government in putting supposed witches to death, in Salem. He was a deacon in the church at Hampstead thirty-five years,—a Justice of the Peace twenty-nine years, and of the Quorum throughout the State thirteen years,—Judge of the Court of Common Pleas twenty-five years,—and Clerk of the House of Representatives twenty-five years. He annually represented this and two neighboring towns in the General Assembly, during the war of the Revolution, at a time when he was under thirty years of age. He was also a member of the Committee of Safety, with discretionary power to transact all State affairs during the recess of the Assembly. At the age of eighteen he was an under officer on the shores of Lake Champlain, in the war against the French and Indians. He was also an officer in the Revolutionary Army. He was Secretary of the Convention for forming the State Constitution, and of the Convention for ratifying the Federal Constitution. He was once chosen State Treasurer, but did not accept the office. In his memoir it is said, “that no man ever more sacredly regarded *the will of the people*, than he. In all his public transactions, his conduct was regulated, not by the views of party men, but by what he conceived to be the wish of the whole people.” He died

in 1808, in the 68th year of his age. On the meeting of the legislature the next month, it was voted, in testimony of respect for his memory that the members of the House would wear black crape on the left arm during the session. "To the close of his life, he sustained a fair, unblemished character, which envy or malice would scarce dare impeach."*

There is not time to notice, at large, other prominent men. A mere mention of their names must suffice. Among those whom we hold in grateful remembrance, are Dea. Peter Eastman, for twenty-five years Town Clerk; Dea. Benjamin Kimball; Capt. William Marshall, the first Representative from this town under the new Constitution; Dea. Timothy Goodwin; Lieut. Peter Morse; Dea. Samuel Currier; Daniel Little, Esq., recently deceased; Dea. Moses Little; Dea. Job Kent; John True, Esq.; Col. Jonathan Little; Reuben Harriman; Col. Benjamin Emerson; Dea. John Emerson; Bartholomew Heath; Jonathan Eastman; Jesse Gordon, Esq.; and Isaac Noyes, Esq., deceased the present year. There are the names of many others, in the history of the town, whom we would like to notice, and who have equal claims upon our remembrance. But time forbids us to delay. Nor is it necessary to recite their histories. We hold their acts in grateful remembrance. The influence of their well spent lives is felt by us to-day. Their love of order and religion, their veneration for things sacred, their public spirit, worthy of imitation in these days, their generosity towards objects of charity, and their friendly relations in neighborhoods and among each other—all their noble traits of character, command our highest veneration.

To the memory of the venerable man who so recently left this world, as we trust, for a better one, it is fitting that we pay more than a passing tribute.

Rev. John Kelly was born in Amesbury, Mass., Feb. 22,

*The preceding account of the prominent citizens is condensed from Mr. Kelly's Sketch of Hampstead, and from the History of Judge Calfe. Information derived from other sources, has been added.

1763 ; he was graduated at Dartmouth College in 1791 ,and ordained at Hampstead, December 5, 1792. There was no dissenting voice against his settlement, although for the ten years previous there had been no settled minister here, and many ineffectual attempts had been made to procure one. The salary voted to him was sixty pounds a year, and the use of the parsonage. " Also ten cords of wood a year for ten years, and if he shall not find that sufficient, liberty to cut more from the Parsonage." When ten years should expire they were to give him fifteen cords a year. They also voted " to give him two cows and six sheep, when called for." To the call and offer of the town, he returned, with his usual frankness, an affirmative answer ; an answer too, which breathes a spirit of evangelical piety.

It is worthy of mention, that Mr. Kelly outlived every individual who was a member of his church at the time he became connected with it. Of all the men that helped settle him, only two survive.* It was his lot to see the rest depart, one after another, to the spirit land, to find himself left almost alone, to mourn their departure, and to witness the extinguishment of the "objects of their ardent hopes and high endeavor."

The result of his labors is known to us all. Scandal never moved its tongue to defame his character, or oppugn his motives. In private life he was distinguished for mildness and dignity ; in the discharge of his public duties, for meekness, for practical knowledge in life and in the scriptures for sound judgment and correct taste. Although all here present may not have agreed with him in religious belief, yet all will unite in awarding to him the best intentions in all his actions. First convinced of the correctness of his opinions, he endeavored mildly, but firmly, to convince others. At the bedside of the sick, and in the house of mourning, he was a frequent visitor. Conscious of the duties and responsibilities of his profession, it was his

*Capt. Jonathan C. Little, and Mr. Hezekiah Ayer.

highest endeavor to live a fit example of a Godly and a Christian Minister. To the dying, he strove to point out the way to eternal life,—to the afflicted, the consolation of religion,—and to all, the importance of obedience, and implicit faith in the wisdom of our Creator.

To him death was a welcome messenger. He was prepared to go “through the valley and shadow of death without fear.” In ripe old age, after almost half a century spent in the work of the ministry, he went down to the grave, beloved and lamented by all who survived him.

We have, thus, fellow citizens, run rapidly over our history, down to the commencement of the present century. The events that have since transpired, are of so recent occurrence, that they need not now be reviewed.

It is but little more than a century, since the first white man pressed his feet upon our soil; and yet how little do we know of the eventful lives of our fathers! The place of their first abode contains hardly a relic of their habitations. In the improvements of the age, and in the progress of the arts, we have lost sight of their customs, and discarded the things so familiar to them. The ruins, yet to be seen, disclose to our minds, scenes of deep and thrilling interest. In the infancy of this settlement, what interesting topics of conversation serve to beguile the weary hours of evening,—what joys and sorrows occurred to break the monotony of their lives,—with what anguish the whole household watched for the return of the absent father or son,—what fear of the prowling wolf, or lurking savage filled their minds wearied with watching,—we have not time to inquire. When, in the long and dark night of the Revolution, so many of their young men had gone forth to battle, with what painful suspense did each family wait for news from the absent ones. And when the painful intelligence came, that the eldest and favorite son of their beloved pastor, had fallen in battle, with what rapidity did the intelligence pass from house to house. What increased anxiety did parents feel, lest the next messenger should

announce that a beloved friend had fallen in battle. What sleepless nights did they pass in tearful thought of the absent ones, the bewildered imagination picturing a fond husband or son suffering the privations of a life in the camp, perchance, lying wounded upon the field of battle, with no friend to bathe his burning temples, or to bring a cup of water to cool his parching thirst. Or again in frightful dreams, beholding his corse, stretched lifeless, upon the battle plains, the cold moonbeams shining into his features, fixed in death.

For a brief hour, we have attempted to live in the past only. We have followed our ancestors from the earliest period in their history to the latest acts of their lives. We have suffered with them in their troubles, and rejoiced with them in their joys. We have seen them, a hardy, enterprising and patient race, struggling against want, and privations, and the calamities of war, and all the evils incident to new settlements; and we have seen them too, though lacking the luxuries of wealth, and the refinements of polished society, exerting their influence, and laboring in the cause of religion and of education, and those benevolent institutions so common to New England, that they have made it renowned the world over, for virtue and enterprise. We have not found them without their faults. But "their faults were usually virtues carried too far;" "faults partly belonging to the times, but more the effect of strong feelings without the advantages of early discipline. At the same time we have seen in them the rudiments of real refinement, warm, kind, and gentle feelings, —and specimens of politeness worthy of the patriarchal age."

But they are gone forever from these places. Their ashes are entombed in yonder burial place. They are gone, and with them all they loved or feared, the objects so dear to them in life, and the temptations they labored so hard to remove. But they yet speak to us. *Their example lives*, and to-day brightens the sun of our existence with its living influence.

There comes up the thought, full of meaning, what will be the condition of our beloved town, a century to come? At the next Centennial Celebration, who will be the actors? Time alone can disclose the fortune that awaits those who shall come after us. But we know who will not be actors then. We shall be "gathered to our fathers." The sun will shine as brightly then upon these beautiful places, these waters will sparkle before his presence reflecting a thousand flashing rays, these trees will afford the same delightful shade, and the earth yield its annual return to the toiling husbandman. But another generation will occupy our places. The names of many of us will be no longer known. But the influence of our lives, will be felt though we be forgotten in our graves.

Nor can we tell what mighty changes will then have been effected. Within the last year and a half, revolution after revolution, in the old world, has taken place in such rapid succession, that the mind awakes to the startling reality, scarcely able to comprehend the sudden change. The King of the French, acknowledged the wealthiest man in the world, the wisest sovereign that ever sat upon the throne of France, and thought to be securely seated upon that throne, the "Citizen King of 1830," is deposed, and in the meanest garb of disguise, flees before an outraged populace to the British Isles for refuge. France, the scene of so much bloodshed, and of so many revolutions, raises the standard of liberty, and other nations, catching the sound of the shouts of freemen, in a day, compel the monarchs of Europe to loosen the reins of power; and thrones that had stood firmly for ages, they make to tremble upon their foundations. Austria, the land of tyranny and oppression, compels her Emperor to abdicate. Prince Metternich, so long the crafty and subtle Prime Minister to a powerful Monarch, whose iron will and selfish heart had so long directed the affair of a nation, whose every thought and act had been directed to the establishment of

despotism and the spread of Popery, suddenly finds himself unable to stem the current of popular indignation and is compelled to retire from the high post he had so basely prostituted, to muse in solitude upon his past life, and commune with his own corrupt heart. The Pope, whose election was hailed by the whole civilized world as the harbinger of a better administration of the affairs at Rome, is hardly seated upon his throne, before he "flees in disguise from his pontifical halls, and St. Peter's and the Vatican resound with the triumphal shouts of an awakened nation." The seed of liberty, sown by our fathers in the days of the Revolution, is springing up in every part of Europe, and promises to convert those despotic powers and monarchies into new and powerful Republics; the voice of the people, so long stifled behind the throne is beginning to reach the ears of Kings and Emperors, and will ere long assert their rights in the majesty of their strength. Hungary is struggling against the most unholy alliance ever entered into to suppress the efforts of a people to become free. She has nobly flung to the breeze the banner of liberty and is bravely contending against the most powerful odds. We wait with the most intense anxiety for the next news that shall tell us of the fate of a people who are imitating our example, and hold in such veneration the memory of our Washington.

"On the Western Continent, the Saxons conquer and dismember Mexico. California outshines the wealth of India. The disloyal Canadians insult the representative of majesty," and the United States are extending their borders over a whole Continent.

In the physical world within a score of years, by the discovery of the application of steam to machinery, we are carried across the waters with a speed and safety, until recently deemed unattainable. The most distant parts of our country are connected by iron rails reaching out and extending in every direction. The hourly rate of speed has gone up from five miles to thirty, and even in some cases

to fifty ; and the most sanguine are not deemed visionary, when they predict that it will soon be increased to an hundred. The electric wire, with the wings of the lightning, conveys every moment, from shore to shore, a new subject for thought or action.

Within the last few years, it has been our fortune to witness these magic changes. Each new year will open to us some new improvement in the world of inventions, and a century hence, the historian of that time will record the discovery of wonders far surpassing any conception which we are able to form.

The interest with which the annual return of this day is awaited, induces me to ask your indulgence for a few moments longer.

This day, the joyful shout, *America is free*, spreads from State to State, from town to town, and from house to house, till the whole land rings with the glad voice, and echo upon echo comes back from every mountain and hill-side, *America is free !* On our mountains and on our plains, on our noble rivers and on the great waters, a thousand voices unite in the shouts of liberty and a thousand echoes send back the soft notes of the songs of Freedom. The deep, shady glens, and beautiful groves resound to the merry voices of thoughtless, innocent children. The busy streets are filled with throngs of freemen, self-divested of the cares and occupations of life. "Eloquence, with burning lips and glowing tongue," portrays those magnificent triumphs, which history has already written for posterity.

Its early dawning is awaited with scarce restrained impatience, to be ushered in with firing of cannons, ringing of bells, and every demonstration of joy. It is celebrated by every class of Americans,—by every society and organization,—by civic processions,—by floral gatherings,—by orations,—by military reviews,—each and all, with the joy and enthusiasm which *Americans* only can feel. The going down of the sun is the signal for the gathering of thou-

sands, to close the festivities of the day with every exhibition of art which the pyrotechnist can display. Amid the blazing of rockets, and the glittering of fire-works, rivaling the stars in splendor and in beauty, end the varied scenes of this Anniversary.

We seem to linger around the scenes of that dark hour in our nation's history, when every hope of the future was involved in doubt and disappointment. The spirit of the past carries us back a period of seventy-three years. We look upon the devoted, self-denying men who composed the memorable Congress of 1776. We consider the thoughts which heaved their breasts; mark the alternations of hope and fear, of confidence and doubt, which reveal the agonies within. We note the solemn stillness that rests upon them,—the deep and absorbing interest, growing more intense. The Declaration of Independence is read. Incensed at the wrongs inflicted upon America, they speak of the shedding of their brother's blood at Lexington, and Concord, and Bunker Hill, in the language of outraged manhood, and vow to avenge the death of their martyr countrymen. "Eloquence is poured forth from inexhaustible fountains. It assumes every variety of hue, and form and motion, which can delight or persuade, instruct or astonish. Now it is the limpid rivulet, sparkling down the mountain's side, and winding its silver course between margins of moss;—anon it is the angry ocean, chafed by the tempest, hanging its billows with deafening clamors among the crackling shrouds, or hurling them in sublime defiance at the storm that frowns above."

It is finished; they declare our country free, and in support of that Declaration, "pledge their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honor." Lives and fortunes were sacrificed in its defence, but our Country's honor was sustained.

Now war is raging throughout our native land. Hostile armies of one and the same name, blood and language, are

arrayed for battle. Years of darkness and doubt succeed, lighted only by some struggling rays of hope, and the fires of war. But darkness and doubt pass at length away, and day dawns upon the long, dark night of the Revolution.

More than half a century has rolled away, since the glory of that bright morning broke upon us, and another scene is disclosed. Where swept the tide of war, now all is calm and fresh and still.

The roll of musketry and the clash of arms are hushed, and the pillow of repose is pressed in quiet. "The busy town and the rural cottage, the lowing herd, the cheerful hearth, the village school, the rising spire, the solemn bell, the voice of prayer and the hymn of praise, brighten and adorn American life and privileges."

You have had imperfectly sketched to you, fellow-townsmen, the most prominent scenes in the history of our native town; and the character of this day required that some allusion should be made to our Country's proud career.

We have performed a grateful duty to the memory of our ancestors. They sought this land when it was a wilderness. The name of Puritan, which was fastened on them as a term of reproach, they meekly accepted, and so adorned the even tenor of their lives, and with the rectitude and consistency of their characters, that it has become more honorable than that of king or ruler. The American traces his descent from the emigrants in the May-Flower, with greater satisfaction, than if he could, with indisputable certainty, trace his ancestral stream back to the proudest noblemen of the most chivalrous age of England.

American and New England privileges, have they left us. They struggled long and hard to establish these free institutions or ours. And when they bequeathed them to us, they also enjoined it upon us to preserve and maintain them untarnished, and hand them down to those who shall come after us, increased instruments of good.

Let us so discharge *our* duties to our Country, to each

other, to ourselves, and to our God, that when in one hundred years from this day, the people of Hampstead shall again assemble to commemorate the Centennial Anniversary of their Incorporation, and the memory of *their* fathers, we may have the same grateful remembrance in their hearts, that our ancestors this day occupy in ours. But if through human error, or party strife, we suffer these golden privileges to become lost,—this sacred legacy to become corrupted in our hands,—in the bitter moments of reflection and regret, there will come to our minds the consoling truth that,

“The spirit cannot always sleep in dust,
Whose essence is etherial ; they may try
To darken and degrade it ; it may rust
Dimly awhile, but cannot wholly die ;
And *when it wakens*, it will send its fire
Intenser forth, and higher.”

